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WORLD COUNCIL DELEGATION VISITS SOUTH KOREA

A high-level World Council of Churches' mission to south Korea confidently predicted after a four-day visit to Seoul that four leading Protestant pastors charged with "embezzling" church funds will be quickly acquitted in a trial scheduled for June 10.

The four Korean church leaders were imprisoned in early April on government charges that they "misused" part of a \$47,000 grant from the Bread For the World agency in Stuttgart. The four are: the Rev. Kim Kwan Suk, general secretary of the Korean National Council of Churches (KNCC); the Rev. Park Hyung Gyu, head of the Seoul Metropolitan Community Organization; the Rev. Cho Seung Hyuk, general secretary of the Urban Industrial Mission; and the Rev. Kwon Ho Kyung, assistant minister at Rev. Park's Cheil Presbyterian Church.

Most observers in Seoul feel the government's arrest of the four was politically motivated, aimed at defusing Korean Christian movements for human rights, democracy and social justice. The indictment, however, is strictly non-political, referring only to "embezzlement".

"Because there is fully documented proof that there was no misuse of the funds whatsoever," said Richard von Weizsäcker, a member of the WCC delegation, "even a youngster could decide the case in 30 minutes." Von Weizsäcker, a member of the WCC Executive Committee and the Council of the Evangelical Church of Germany, has close contacts with Bread For the World (BFW).

He explained that BFW has approved all Korean uses of the fund--mostly for community organization work in the slums of Seoul--and that the defense lawyers have these full records and authorizations.

The other members of the WCC delegation were Dr. William Thompson, Stated Clerk of the United Presbyterian Church U.S.A. and a member of the WCC Central Committee; Dr. T. B. Simatupang, president of the Christian Conference of Asia, head of the Indonesian NCC, and a member of the WCC Executive Committee; and Leopoldo J. Nilus, an Argentinian who heads the WCC's diplomatic wing, the Commission of the Churches on International Affairs, in Geneva.

In addition to meeting with south Korean Protestant and Catholic leaders, the delegation met many political leaders including four members of the Park Chung Hee Cabinet. In discussions with the Minister of Justice, the WCC team made clear that it had "no intention of interfering in the due process of law yet insisted that "the innocence of the four is clear" based on all evidence.

The delegation told the Justice Minister that BFW is willing to send a representative to testify at the June 10 hearing. The minister refused to say if such a representative would be allowed to testify in court, but he did promise

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WCC DELEGATION (cont'd)

observer status, saying the trial would be open. Team members conjectured that the trial, originally scheduled for May 30, was delayed because of the team's arrival in Seoul.

The WCC mission was unable to meet the four defendants or the judge in the case. Requests to meet with President Park and Prime Minister Kim Jong Pil were also turned down. But they did meet the prosecutor in the case, and they ran into the problem of government definitions of *mission* and *freedom of religion*. The prosecutor argued that mission should be charity to the poor, and that freedom of religion meant the right to worship shorn of any political context or meaning.

Von Weizsäcker, who visited a Seoul slum, insisted that the church's concern with the poor went beyond paternalistic charity to "enabling people to participate in decisions affecting their lives." Nilus added that the issue was not just the four pastors, nor a matter of special privileges for Christians, "but the right of all Koreans, inside and outside the churches, to be concerned and involved with the total welfare of all fellow countrymen."

Team members said the ROK churches were unanimous in believing that the April arrests represent a "direct infringement of freedom of religion".

Von Weizsäcker, who had visited south Korea twice in the late '60s, told a June 3 press conference in Tokyo that he had "the greatest admiration and respect for the Korean churches which, in the face of difficulty and suffering, have stood on their beliefs and principles." He and Nilus told the press they thought government repression had served to unite the churches.

"The government has tried to isolate UIM-type people and projects from the mainstream of the churches," said Nilus, "but the government crackdown have served to rally and unite even the local churches." Nilus, visiting Korea for the first time, said he thought the repression "has done a lot for consciousness-raising." He said he felt that the social awareness of Korean Christians is broader than that of Latin American Christians.

Yet Nilus does not minimize the problems facing the Korean churches: "The church is the key democratic force left now," he said. "The struggle now is not just for church freedom but for survival of the whole democratic movement. In a hierarchical society like Korea, the arrest of top church officials must be considered a frontal attack on the whole church."

He added that the government attack extends to Hankuk Theological Seminary, where the government is demanding that 10 students and two professors be "relieved". Of some two dozen campuses closed by government order in April, the seminary was the only one still closed in early June.

Team members said national security is "a paramount concern of the fiercely anti-communist south Korean people." The government has carefully exploited such concern since the fall of Vietnam, using it as a justification for further suppression of civil liberties. Yet the delegation found few Koreans who believed government reports about an "imminent attack" from north Korea. Many of the Koreans said they felt that ROK government repression was creating a situation inimicable to national security.

"Security is a perfectly legitimate concern of any self-determining people," said Nilus in Tokyo, "but we heard many voices saying that a strong, free and democratic nation is ultimately the best security."

Team members said they received VIP treatment from the government as well

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WCC DELEGATION (cont'd)

as the churches. Despite government hospitality, however, no news of the WCC visit was permitted in the government-controlled, Korean-language media.

The visit took place during one of the most trying springs in recent Korean history. Since March, the last vestige of a free press, the *Donga Ilbo* newspaper, has been silenced; eight alleged "communists" have been hanged; and a new and broadly repressive "Emergency Measure 9" has been issued. All of this is on top of the church repression and the pervasive "communist invasion" scare.

All members of the WCC delegation said they will be closely watching ROK developments and will be following through in both their WCC and national contexts. Dr. Thompson is scheduled to appear before Rep. Donald Fraser's House Sub-Committee on Human Rights in Washington June 10. All members will be awaiting news of the acquittal of the four Korean ministers, expected that same day.

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CHRISTIANS FOR POLITICAL REFORM

In an effort to raise the level of political morality, an association has been formed of Christians committed to increasing Christians' political awareness and encouraging Christian candidates.

Heading the Kirisutosha Seiji Renmei is former Diet member Seiichi Yokokawa, who retired last July after 18 years in the House of Councillors. Other officers are Lawyer Kenkichi Nakadaira, vice chairman, and the Rev. Yoichi Harada, Kami-hoshikawa Church, Yokohama, secretary. The 19-member Central Committee is composed of Catholic and Protestant laity and pastors, scattered denominationally and geographically. The present membership of 180 persons is divided about equally between lay and clergy.

Launched in January, Kiseiren has gradually picked up momentum. In February it began publication of *Kiseiren*, mailing the first issue to some 8,000 churches and Christian organizations in Japan. On May 20 it sponsored a review of the significant developments in the court victory of the Rev. Tanetani, whose right to fulfill his duties as a Christian pastor was upheld by the court after his arrest on charges of harboring fugitives from the law (see JCAN #469, Feb. 28, 75).

The Kirisutosha Seiji Renmei, Yokokawa said recently in an interview, must challenge a Christian community in which opposition to Christians participating in politics is deep rooted. Many pastors, including some youngster seminary graduates, cite separation of state and religion as the grounds for their posture of non-involvement.

The Call to the Churches, issued by the preparatory committee in December, however, warned that "if Christians remain silent in the midst of the corruption and decline that characterize Japanese politics today, they will certainly be guilty of the sin of negligence."

The Kiseiren "covenant (compact, agreement)" states:
We Christians, entrusted with the gospel of reconciliation and believing that the Risen Christ is indeed the Lord of the world, will freely carry out responsible actions and issue responsible statements, respecting the democratic form of government in the Japanese Constitution and continuing to pray for the establishment of "peace on earth."

Yokokawa expressed his disappointment over the decreasing number of Christians in the Diet and the fact that no Christians appeared to replace him or

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POLITICAL REFORM (cont'd)

Sekikazu Nishimura, both of whom retired from the Diet last July.

Thus, the main purposes of Kiseiren are to awaken Christians to a concern for political affairs and to nurture Christians willing to run the political gauntlet so as to improve political and national life.

The new group will not espouse any one party but transcend party lines, said Yokokawa, himself a member of the Japan Socialist Party. Today all Japanese political parties need reform, he said.

The conviction that a democratic society requires responsible participation by all citizens gave rise to the formation of the Japan Socialist Party in 1945, Yokokawa recalled. It was in this spirit that Christian statesmen like Tetsu Katayama, Jotaro Kawakami and Motojiro Sugiyama provided leadership to the JSP in its early days. But the JSP today is not what it was then, Yokokawa observed. What is needed is a return to the spirit of those men. In addition to his career in the Diet and regular participation in the Diet Prayer meetings, Yokokawa has been a member of the Board of the Japan Academy Movement. He is currently president of the Japan-Soviet Trade Association. Nakadaira is a former judge who, since his resignation from the Tokyo High Court, has taken a number of human right cases, including the Park vs Hitachi case, the Tanetani case, and the pending Aoyama Gakuin case related to the threatened closing of the theological seminary. Harada, formerly editor of the *Sinto no Tomo* (Friend of the Layman, published by the Kyodan) has worked with Yokokawa and Nakadaira in various efforts that were forerunners of the new association.

According to Yokokawa, the new organization represents the first attempt of Christians to come together in a supra-denominational, supra-party organ of political action.

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TAKING A NEW LOOK

by Kaneko Ishikawa,
Shukugawara Preaching Point

(This article is reprinted from the April issue of the Kyodan News Letter, a special issue devoted almost entirely to women ministers in the Kyodan(United Church of Christ in Japan). Copies of the entire issue can be ordered from: Kyodan News Letter, Japan Christian Center Room #31, 3-18 Nishi-Waseda 2-chome, Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo 160. -----eds.-----)

I graduated from Doshisha School of Theology in 1961 and worked for 10 months with a missionary in evangelistic work. In January of 1962 I married. The following April my husband entered the 5-year course of Japan Biblical Seminary, a night school.

During that period I opened my home to 2 and 1/2 rooms for evangelism. I didn't know a soul and was surrounded by mulberry trees, peach trees and rice fields. Weekdays I worked at the nearby kindergarten, 95% of my salary going for rent. My husband worked days, and this paid for our daily expenses.

An enthusiastic housewife living one train station away was our one member. Two high school girls became seekers. The financial situation was tight, but with our youth and enthusiasm, the five years passed happily.

In 1967 my husband graduated from seminary and became a licentiate. At the

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WOMAN PASTOR (cont'd)

same time our work was recognized as a Kyodan preaching point. Two years later, in 1969, my husband passed the examination for ordination. I, too, although I was called sensei, took the test for licentiate. We've continued along that way, my husband being the "pastor," I, the "evangelist."

Now a committee has been organized on the problems of women pastors. In the midst of becoming aware of the situations women pastors face and the discrimination that still exists against women in the home and society, I am being forced to reflect on the path I've taken over the years and the fact that, because of my feeling that I am a woman and a wife, I have assumed the role of "helper."

I believe we cannot expect any change in the attitude toward women in society, in our homes(including Christian homes) and in the Kyodan, the districts, the sub-districts unless we change our views on what the church ought to be and on the formation of the church, looking at this from the perspective of our coming together as human beings and as Christians. I feel therefore we must both engage in self criticism and nurture a new consciousness with regard to women.

We are also thinking about women being elected to responsible positions in the Kyodan and the districts. In the awakening that is taking place women themselves are realizing their lack of leadership ability and seeking to get training. Thus I think that women are beginning not to want to evade responsibility because they are women but to take responsibility and carry it through.

Recently, at church I have begun to preach the sermon once a month. I handle office details for the church school and church finances and the seekers' class.

At home we have gradually departed from the idea that, because I am a woman I can prepare meals at any time. Now, whichever one of us is free fixes the meal. This, in turn, is influencing the young people so that there is no resistance on the part of boys or girls to pouring the tea or helping clean the church.

Now we've moved to a larger house---a farm-house---and rented a building for the church. In the process of forming the church, I myself am growing and being formed and nurtured as a pastor.

--- Translated by Helen Post

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ANOTHER FORCIBLE EXPULSION?--THE CASE OF HAN MIN WANG FAMILY

If the "forcible expulsion order" of the Justice Ministry of the Japanese government is carried out as scheduled, a Korean resident in Japan, Han Min Wang, his wife and four children will be "repatriated" soon. Han and his wife belong to the category of "illegal entrant" -- they both entered Japan from Korea years ago, without filling the required papers, and have since been leading constructive, peaceful, and economically useful lives in their community.

Mr. Han, now 32, was born in Japan (Hyogo Prefecture). Like all other Koreans (whether in Japan or in Korea itself), Han was regarded as a Japanese by the Japanese government. His brother even served in the Japanese Imperial Army. At the end of the war, Korea returned to self-rule and the Japanese colonial administration returned to Japan. Han's family automatically reverted to Korean citizenship overnight. After the war, Han was taken back to Korea by his parents when he was only four years old. In 1962 he married Koh Chun Ju.

His wife came to Japan as an "illegal entrant" in February of that year. Two years later, in February 1974, Han followed, also as an "illegal entrant."

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FORCIBLE EXPULSION (cont'd)

Both of them had relatives living in Japan, which made it possible for them to set up home and pass nearly a decade undetected by Japanese Immigration Police. Things went quite well for them at first, though insecurity plagued their daily lives. Detection might mean immediate expulsion to Korea, where their only prospect was unemployment and destitution. So long as they were able to continue living undetected in Japan they would be able to provide for their children and enjoy a life which, while not prosperous, at least offered them the daily necessities of life.

All of that changed abruptly two years ago when their oldest child came of school age. If their child was to enter school, he would have to register, which would call for the necessary Japanese papers. In the eye of the law, Yong Ho, their oldest child, did not exist, since his birth had not been registered. With Yong Ho just turned 6 and the beginning of the school term just days away, Mr. Han went to the Osaka Office of the Immigration Department of the Ministry of Justice, and confessed that, more than nine years before, he had entered Japan without a visa. He applied for a "Special Residence Permit." This was turned down. Instead he was served with a "Forcible Expulsion Order" which the Justice Ministry indicates it may carry out sometime in late June or early July.

Rev. Senoo and Rev. Choi of the Korean Christian Center in Osaka, along with Christian and non-Christian members of the Committee to Protect the Human Rights of Foreigners, have organized a citizens' defense committee on behalf of the Han family. They have organized a petition campaign (copies available at the KCC in Osaka or the RAIK office in Tokyo) and are requesting donations from interested persons.

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MISCELLANEOUS NEWS

FINANCIAL DETAILS OF OGLE TRIP---The NCCJ would like to express its thanks to all those who contributed money, time and energy, making possible the visit of the Rev. George Ogle to Japan early this year. Rev. Ogle, deported from south Korea in December of 1974, was invited to Japan in early February to present a first-hand report of the Korean situation.

Individuals and organizations combined to contribute more than twice the cost of the Ogle visit, according to a financial report released to contributors. Total expenses, including air fare for George Ogle and in-Japan transportation and food for the Ogle family, totalled ¥449,532, while donations come to over ¥900,000. The remainder of the money will be used to support the Korean Christian struggle.

Hiroshima in Memoriam and Today, a collection of photographs, documented experiences and appeals for "no more Hiroshimas," has been reprinted with some corrections and is again available. Write: The Society for the Publication of "Hiroshima in Memoriam and Today," c/o Hitoshi Takayama(editor), 2565 Funakoshi-cho, Aki-gun, Hiroshima, Japan 736. Price \$4 plus \$1 postage. Profits go for peace activities.

'PRP' BOOKLET AVAILABLE---A recently published 74-page booklet provides the fullest details to date concerning the "People's Revolutionary Party" in south Korea. Seven alleged members of the "PRP" were executed by the ROK government on April 9, despite loud protests from Christians and others that the men were framed. *The PRP: State Conspiracy* is available for ¥1,000 (including postage.) Write: Cry of the People Committee, P.O. Box 37, Ashiya, Hyogo, Japan.